

Docks were important to area commerce

Before automobiles and a network of roads connecting communities, transportation was difficult.

Building a road through the forest or over a swamp was a serious undertaking. It was cheaper and easier to rely on water transportation wherever possible. The situation in the Dycksville/Red River area was no exception.

Because of its bayside location, Dyckesville and Red River were easily accessible by water. Docks sprung up in a number of bayside locations. One of these dock operations was started by Louis Van Dycke in 1860 just west of Wisconsin 57 and County A. The original dock included a shingle mill and a sawmill. The village of Red River,

complete with its own past office, grew around this operation. This community of about 400 people no longer exists.

Eventually the operation was sold to Herbert "Bert" Scofield, who later became an Assemblyman and the mayor of Sturgeon Bay, and John Leathem. On December 23, 1880, a notice in the *Algoma Road* announced "the firm of Scofield and Co. have ceased sawing lumber at Red River and will move their mill to some other point."

The dock continued to serve the community. William Barrette purchased the docking operation in about 1895 for \$1,400. Within a few years he took in as a partner, Emil LeRoy, who apparently had



Barrette



Throughout this year of Wisconsin's Sesquicentennial celebration, the Press-Gazette will publish a series of stories on local history. This feature, prepared with the assistance of the Brown County Historical Society, will appear on Mondays.



the money for the inventory of goods sold there. Officially it was the Barrette-LeRoy Dock, but old-timers always called it Barrette's Dock.

Hay was transported across the bay to lumber camps in northern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. People who needed to go to Green Bay on business or pleasure would board boats that plied the bay. The docking operation had furniture, coal, cement, finished lumber, and farm implements, as well as

many other goods for sale. Farm products were brought to the dock for resale in Green Bay. When sugar beets were a staple cash crop in the area, loaded wagons would line up to empty their contents into barges bound for Green Bay. Excursion boats would bring groups out from Green Bay.

In 1912 tragedy struck when a boat — loaded with baled hay and straw bound for Marinette — ran aground on a sandbar dur-

ing a storm. Rescue efforts were attempted, but all on board lost their lives. Two seamen were brought to shore, but they did not survive. For their rescue efforts, the Rev. C.M. Melchers of St. Louis Church, Edward Delfosse and George DeBaker Sr. received Carnegie medals.

With the coming of the automobile and good roads, the operation began to fade into the annals of history. The business ceased operation in 1924.

Today little remains of the



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Barrette's Dock near Dyckesville was a busy place in the late 1890s and early 1900s. Goods such as furniture, finished lumber, coal, cement and farm products were loaded and unloaded from ships and barges sailing the bay. This photo of the dock was taken in the 1920s.

dock. That which once extended some distance into the bay has eroded into a small point of land several blocks south of Red River County Park. One building still stands and is used as a cottage. The road leading to this once busy dock has been named Barrett Dock Road and it is lined on both sides with a mixture of summer cottages and year-round residences.

Submitted by Jerry Abitz of the Kewaunee Historical Society.